one or more flexible luminescent lamps underlying said one or more components to provide an intensity of illumination to said components visual to a user of the mouse.

Please add new claims 27 and 28 as follows:

27. The mouse of claim 26, wherein the one or more mouse components includes an exterior, upper mouse enclosure component.

28. The mouse of claim 26, wherein the one or more mouse components includes an optically transmissive mouse button.

II. REMARKS

Claims 26-28 are pending in the case. The Examiner objected to the drawings because they did not show every feature claimed in claim 26. In addition, the Examiner rejected claim 26 as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 5,899,553 to Howell ("Howell").

A. Drawing Objections

The Examiner objected to the drawings because they did not show every feature claimed in claim 26. In response to this objection, Applicants propose to add new Figures 6A and 6B and have amended the specification to properly describe the drawings. Applicants point out that no new matter is being added by the specification amendments and additional drawings. They are fully supported by the originally-filed specification, as well as by originally-filed claim 26. See, for example, page 5, lines 24-25 ("E-L lamps are thin, flexible and can be twisted, bent or formed into any shape.") and page 8, lines 24-29 ("Moreover, the methods of the present invention disclosed herein can be applied to the manufacture of an illuminated mouse, by making the mouse buttons and exterior enclosure of an optically transmissive material and underlying these components with one or more luminescent sheets connected to a suitable power source."). Thus, it is respectfully argued that the drawing objection has been properly redressed.

B. Claim Rejection

The Examiner rejected claim 26 as being anticipated by Howell. for a reference to anticipate a claim, it must teach each and every limitation in the claim. Amended claim 26 claims a mouse with one or more optically transmissive exterior mouse components with one or more underlying luminescent lamps to provide an intensity of illumination to users of the mouse.

Howell does not anticipate claim 26 because it does not teach several of these limitations. Howell teaches a planar, electro-luminescent template for lighting an "underlying" handheld device. (Col. 2, ll. 11-12). Howell defines "underlying devices" as follows:

> Underlying devices represent finger actuated electrical devices with push buttons which derive some benefit from being illuminated. Such underlying devices may be hand operated. Examples of such underlying devices include but are not limited to stereo and television remote controllers, keypads for security systems, telephones, computer keyboards, beepers, video games, night lights, portable emergency lighting, baby monitors, citizens band radios, money converters, control panel labels, garage door openers, hospital wall and portable intermittent and constant suction devices, intravenous pumps, oxygen wall units, digital ear and oral thermometers, walkie talkies, conventional and microwave ovens, thermostats, clock radios, answering machines, hospital bed controls, and calculators.

(Howell at Col. 2, ll. 12-26). Thus, Howell's underlying devices are devices having push buttons that can be lit by placing an E-L template atop the device and about the buttons. All of the devices listed by Howell satisfy this requirement. It's interesting to note that with such an exhaustive list that includes a computer keyboard, there is no mention of a mouse. As defined by Howell, an underlying device is a device that lies under a planar (i.e., flat) electro-luminescent sheet, which produces light atop the device and around the buttons. In contrast, Applicants' mouse is lit by one or more E-L lamps positioned under optically transmissive exterior mouse components to emit light from the mouse. Howell clearly does not teach these limitations.

This fundamental distinction is emphasized in Howell as follows:

> The present invention permits lighting an underlying device by template illumination, rather than by back lighting the device. Template illumination allows the invention to be added to pre-existing devices without requiring extensive disassembly of such devices, or it may be added to newly manufactured devices.

(Howell at col. 2, ll. 36-41). Thus, Howell clearly does not disclose Applicants' back-lit mouse of claim 26. In fact, it expressly teaches away from it. Not only does Howell not anticipate claim 26, but also, it could not serve as a basis for claim 26 to be obvious. A person of skill would not be motivated to modify Howell to achieve Applicants' illuminated mouse because it expressly teaches away from it with its template lit device, as it expressly distinguishes from back-lit devices.

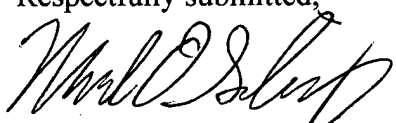
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw its rejection of claim 26.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have obviated the various objections and rejections. Consequently, claims 26-28 appear to be allowable, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is

invited to contact the undersigned attorney, at 512/238-7253 with any questions, comments or suggestions relating to the referenced patent application.

Respectfully submitted,



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APPENDIX A

Claim Amendments

26. (Amended) An illuminated mouse comprising:

one or more exterior mouse components comprising an optically transmissive material; and

[a] one or more flexible luminescent [sheet] lamps underlying said one or more components to provide an intensity of illumination to said components visual to a user of the [apparatus] mouse.

27. (New) The mouse of claim 26, wherein the one or more mouse components includes an exterior, upper mouse enclosure component.

28. (New) The mouse of claim 26, wherein the one or more mouse components includes an optically transmissive mouse button.

APPENDIX C

SPECIFICATION AMENDMENT MARK-UPS

1. First amendment ("Brief Description of the Drawings" section):

-- FIG. 5 illustrates placement of a luminescent sheet above a well plate.

FIGS. 6A and 6B respectively illustrate a conventional mouse and an illuminated mouse of the present invention. --

2. Second amendment (page 8, last paragraph):

-- An advantage of using a flexible luminescent sheet is the ability to provide illumination for non-traditional keyboards, such as ergonomic keyboards that are arcuate in shape in one or more spatial directions. Moreover, the methods of keyboard illumination disclosed herein can readily be adapted to any keyboard manufacturing process. This would enable a manufacturer of non-illuminated keyboards to quickly and inexpensively become a manufacturer of illuminated keyboards without developing an entirely new manufacturing process to accommodate specialized configurations. Further, the methods of the present invention disclosed herein can be implemented by any person of ordinary skill in the art to convert existing keyboards into illuminated keyboards. Moreover, the methods of the present invention disclosed herein can be applied to the manufacture of an illuminated mouse, by making the mouse buttons and exterior enclosure of an optically transmissive material and underlying these components with one or more luminescent sheets connected to a suitable power source. For example, with reference to Figures 6A and 6B, an illuminated mouse 655 is shown based on conventional mouse 605. In the depicted drawing, conventional mouse 605 includes upper exterior enclosure 607, lower exterior enclosure 609, left/right mouse buttons 611A/B, and mouse cable 613. Illuminated mouse 657 comprises the same general design, except that upper exterior enclosure 657 and/or mouse buttons 611A/B are formed from optically transmissive materials, and a desired combination of formed EL lamps 667, 661A, and 661B are mounted under their corresponding optically transmissive components. Underlying E-L lamps 667 and 661 may be derived from bent and/or formed E-L sheets as discussed above. In addition, a suitable power source (not shown) is connected to the E-L lamps within mouse 655. --